

Smallpox Vaccination

What to Do After the Shot

Live vaccinia virus (not smallpox virus) will be present at the vaccination site from the time a skin lesion first appears (2-5 days after vaccination) until the scab comes off (14-21 days after vaccination). During this time, you should take care to avoid spreading the virus to other parts of your body or to other people.

DO . . .

- **Cover the vaccination site loosely with a gauze bandage.** Keep it covered until the scab has separated on its own. This bandage will provide a barrier to protect against accidental spread of the vaccine virus to other parts of your body or to other people.
- **Change the bandage every 1-2 days.** This will keep skin at the vaccination site from softening and wearing away.
- **Wash your hands with soap and warm water after direct contact with the vaccination site or the gauze bandage covering the site.** This is vital in order to remove the virus from your hands. It can prevent accidental spread of the virus to other areas of your body or to other people.
- **Keep the vaccination site dry.** You can bathe normally after covering the vaccination site with a water-resistant pad, such as a band-aid.
- **Dispose of contaminated bandages in a sealed plastic bag.**
- **Wash clothing or other cloth materials that come in contact with the vaccination site.** Use hot water with bleach.
- **When the scab separates, dispose of it in a sealed plastic bag.**

DON'T . . .

- **Don't use a bandage that blocks all air from the vaccination site.** This may cause the skin at the vaccination site to soften and wear away.
- **Don't put salves or ointments on the vaccination site.**



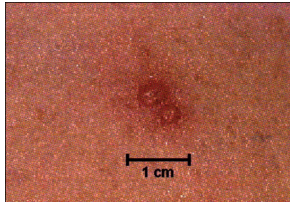
You can expect some redness around the site of the vaccination, and you may run a mild fever and have tender swollen lymph nodes under the armpit. *See the other side of this form for descriptions of what the vaccination site should look like.*

Call the number shown below if:

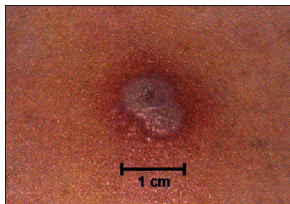
- You have any questions regarding this vaccination.
- You have an unusual reaction at the vaccination site (see back for expected reaction).
- You develop more lesions or a rash on other parts of your body.
- You develop a severe headache.
- You become confused or extremely drowsy.

The Smallpox Vaccination Site

Expect the site where you get the smallpox vaccination to progress through roughly the stages shown below by these approximate times.



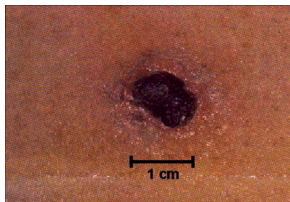
Day 4: The site becomes red and itchy, and a bump appears.



Day 7: The bump has become a large blister surrounded by a red area. The blister fills with pus and often begins to drain.



Day 14: The blister is drying up and the redness is decreasing. A scab forms.



Day 21: The scab falls off, leaving a scar. The scar is pink at first, but will eventually become flesh-colored.

If the appearance of your vaccination site differs significantly from the picture and description for **Day 7** a week after your vaccination, call the number on the other side of this sheet to schedule an evaluation.